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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

SUBJECT Bulgarian State Air Lines: Routes/Fares/Service.

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1. "On the Bulgarian State Air Lines the following passenger air routes are at present [early 1953] in operation:
 - (a) Sofia-Plovdiv-Burgas-Stalin (Varna)
 - (b) Sofia-Gorna Orhovitsa Stalin (Varna) - Burgas.
2. "Air travel is rather slow. It takes:
 - 40 minutes from Sofia to Plovdiv,
 - two hours from Sofia-Plovdiv to Burgas,
 - two hours from Sofia-Gorna Orhovitsa to Stalin.
3. "In comparison with railway fares, air line tickets are expensive: for example, the railway passenger fare from Sofia to Plovdiv costs less than 30 leva; by fast train about 34 leva. By air the same trip costs 51 leva. Other plane fares:

Sofia-Plovdiv-Burgas	78 Leva
Sofia-Gorna Orhovitsa	60 Leva
Sofia-Gorna Orhovitsa Stalin	83 Leva
4. "Reservations for air travel must be made a day before the flight. The identification documents of all passengers must be carefully examined by the booking agents. Shortly before the plane takes off, all passengers must present their luggage for inspection

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at the airport. At times passengers are subjected to bodily search. For this purpose there are special booths where male and female passengers can undress. The rules about luggage and personal inspection do not apply to foreigners.

5. "During a flight the crew are locked up in the pilot's cabin. They can leave it only after the last passenger leaves the plane at the final destination.
6. "The Bulgarian State Air Lines operate Soviet-make, two-engine, Douglas-type planes, with 24 to 33-passenger capacity. These planes are very comfortable, with soft upholstered seats. Only soft drinks and sandwiches are served, but such service is not included in the fare. The stewardesses are called Camariarka.
7. "The last air crash occurred in autumn 1952."

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